

	Portales Police Department	SOP #	306.01
	Standard Operating Procedure & Policy	PER. #	06.01-06.04
1700 N. Boston St. Portales NM, 88130	Performance Evaluations		
(575) 356-4404		Approval:	Pat Gallegos, Chief of Police

## I. EVALUATION PHILOSOPHY

Performance Evaluation refers to the formal method by which an organization evaluates and documents the work performance of its employees.

- A. It is one of the most critical tasks a supervisor engages in, as employee development, improvement, and satisfaction in the officer's police career are high objectives within the organization.
- B. The objective behind performance evaluation is not merely to analyze someone's performance, but to explore ways to improve performance and enhance the officer's career. Nothing is more vital than helping people contribute more on the job and assisting them in working at their maximum capability.
- C. The Portales Police Department has adopted a philosophy of Enhanced Service Policing that requires, to a degree, a realignment of duties and responsibilities on the part of each employee within the organization.
- D. As a result of this philosophy, supervisors must provide an enhanced level of supervision. Part of this enhanced supervision is a rethinking of the performance evaluation system. Instead of producing evaluations that are meaningless to employees, the supervisor and employee develop a partnership and, together, they work on completion of the performance evaluation.
- E. Employees will be evaluated annually.
- F. Probationary employees will be evaluated at six months and then prior to the end of the yearlong probationary period.
- G. The performance evaluation provides for:
  1. Meaningful two-way discussion between the supervisor and the employee regarding his or her performance;

2. Uncovering new ways for the individual to perform more effectively in the future so that the employee, the supervisor, and the organization will benefit;
  3. Improved and more effective job performance;
  4. Individual employee growth and development;
  5. Organizational growth and development by providing a climate suitable for positive growth, development, improvement, and change.
- H. The evaluation process is a dynamic one. Evaluations produce continuous progress both for the organization and its people. The purpose is to develop individual people who are steadily growing, enlarging their skills, and learning new and better ways to perform their job.
- I. The evaluation process described herein has been developed as part of the ongoing process of enhanced supervision and enhanced police service delivery.
- J. Enhanced service policing and enhanced supervision occur daily, all day long. Therefore, by providing current, regular, and meaningful feedback in both directions, helps all employees and the organization improve and grow which, in turn, benefits the community we are sworn to protect and serve.
- K. The procedures outlined in this manual have been developed so that it may be used across the organization; they are merely guidelines to assist the supervisor and employee in developing the evaluation.
- L. Upon initial reading, the process may sound lengthy and cumbersome; however, most steps do not involve a great deal of time, particularly in that the employee and supervisor will communicate on a regular basis throughout the year.
- M. The course to follow for completion of the evaluation has been broken down into several "processes". The term "process" was chosen because it truly and accurately reflects what is being accomplished here; namely, that the completion of the evaluation is a system of operations in the production of the evaluation. It is an ongoing movement that results in a cyclical, never-ending process.

## II. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

### A. Process one: Observation/Preparation

1. Supervisors should become thoroughly familiar with each

employee's previous evaluation history so that the supervisor can work with the employee in developing goals and objectives.

2. The supervisor should guard against developing pre-conceived notions of an employee while familiarizing himself/herself with an employee's history.
3. Rather, the objective is to enlighten the supervisor to areas of improvement, areas where goals and objectives can be developed, and areas in which the employee may need special attention.
4. The supervisor, throughout the period being reviewed, should have observed the performance of the employee being evaluated. This requires the supervisor becoming very familiar with the areas being evaluated and what performance is expected as stated in the behavioral anchors.
5. There are many ways to observe an employee's performance. The more traditional methods include reviewing the employee's reports, paperwork, and radio activity. The supervisor also observes the employee carrying out the job functions.
6. Among non-traditional methods is the actual observation of the employee testifying in court, the contacting of citizens who have previously had contact with the officer, and in-depth analysis of complaints lodged against the officer and the observation of the employee identifying and solving problems, as well as the employee's ability to implement the philosophy of Enhanced Service Policing.
7. The non-traditional methods are used in conjunction with the traditional methods...the end result is more accurate and realistic observations of the employee as they apply to the evaluative categories.
8. The ongoing, detailed documentation of these observations by the supervisor will then assist the supervisor in preparing the actual evaluation document.
9. The supervisors will set up and maintain a supervisor/employee log on each employee.
10. The supervisor must then collate the data gathered throughout the observation period and coordinate the information with the evaluation categories.
11. Upon conclusion of this process, the supervisor is then prepared for Process Two: The Pre-Evaluation Conference with the

Employee.

#### B. Process Two: Pre-evaluation Conference

1. The supervisors will hold a pre-evaluation meeting to discuss each employees performance and what is on the supervisor/employee log.
2. The supervisor to do the pre-evaluation with each individual employee will be selected at this time.
3. The pre-evaluation conference is the actual face-to-face conference between the supervisor and the employee.
4. The purpose of this conference is to discuss with the employee his or her performance during the evaluation period. Two-way communication is vitally important here, as the supervisor must be willing to listen to input provided by the employee being evaluated.
5. Many times, supervisors, either through lack of documentation or forgetting, neglect to note in the evaluation information that which is important both to the employee and the organization. The pre-evaluation conference gives the employee the opportunity to bring forth accomplishment and areas of improvement that may have otherwise gone unnoticed.
6. The conference also facilitates and acts as a catalyst to the development of a partnership between the employee and supervisor. The content of the evaluation and the goals established are more meaningful to the employee because of their partnership in the process.
7. The supervisor should explore the following areas during the pre-evaluation conference:
  - a. Employee's perception of own strengths, weakness, accomplishment, and developmental needs;
  - b. Employee's goals and objectives for the following evaluation period;
  - c. Career goals and objectives;
  - d. Input from the employee to the supervisor as to ways service, performance, supervision, and general organizational objectives can be improved.

8. The pre-evaluative conference is not limited solely to these four points; the main objective is to gather information from the employee that will assist the supervisor in preparing the evaluation and assisting the supervisor in improving many areas of organizational performance.
9. While this process sounds cumbersome and time-consuming, the supervisor should be doing many of these things throughout the evaluation period on an ongoing basis. If done as an ongoing process, the actual need for such formal conference may be unnecessary. Even so, the conference is highly desirable and will undoubtedly yield excellent results.
10. The pre-evaluative conference is particularly useful with an employee who may be receiving a less than favorable evaluation. Continual interaction with this employee and soliciting the employee's involvement may help in improving the employee's performance. At the very least, the employee should be fully aware of the concerns, and the steps taken, or to be taken, to improve performance. In such a case, the supervisor would document all relevant information related to working with the employee in the improvement process.

#### C. Process Three: Signing the Evaluation

1. Writing the evaluation tends to be perceived as the most difficult part of the process. If the prior processes have been followed the actual writing of the evaluation should be relatively simple.
2. With all the relevant information and data in front of you, you will generally want to re-familiarize yourself with the behavioral anchors associated with each category.
3. You then begin the process of determining the category in which the employee falls; i.e., above, below, meets expectations, then complete a brief narrative to substantiate the rating.
4. The brief narrative should include important and relative points that further clarify or substantiate the rating given. The evaluation requires a narrative if the supervisor rates a category above or below expectations.
5. While a narrative is not compulsory if a "meets" rating is given, the supervisor should consider a brief narrative to further state additional, important, relative information. Generally, a brief summary in each category will be sufficient.
6. While writing the evaluation, the supervisor remains aware of the

evaluator errors that sometime occur while completing an evaluation. Please refer to the end of this handbook for a detailed discussion of these errors.

7. The content of the evaluation should be inclusive of all observations made by the supervisor, information, and input from the pre-evaluation conference, goals, and objectives, and any other relevant data or information. The final evaluation should be a mirror of the first two processes, and no surprise to the employee.
8. The supervisor should consider allowing the employee to read the evaluation at this point to ensure accuracy and completeness. This is not to suggest that bargaining occurs, rather, it allows the employee the opportunity to know what command officers and city administrators will be reading.

#### D. Process Four: Appraisal Session

1. Once the completed evaluation has been reviewed, then returned to the supervisor, the supervisor should contact the employee and set up a mutually agreed upon time to meet to discuss the completed evaluation.
2. The supervisor should have the employee read the evaluation in its entirety prior to the appraisal session.
3. The purpose in doing so is that no information contained within the evaluation should be surprise; therefore, the employee and supervisor can spend their time during the appraisal session focusing on the goals and objectives set, as well as those areas of improvement and development necessary.
4. This process is distinguished from the pre-evaluation conference in that during the pre-evaluation conference session, the objective is to gather information to be used on the evaluation. The appraisal session, on the other hand, provides for the opportunity to disseminate information and discuss the plan for improvement, development, and the goals and objectives, etc.
5. Upon conclusion of the discussion of the evaluation, the employee should be permitted a reasonable amount of time to prepare, and then write a written response to the evaluation, if so requested by the employee.
6. A written response should not be discouraged or viewed in a negative light, rather provides a setting that encourages cooperativeness between the department, supervisor, and employee. Discontent should not be allowed to accumulate in the

employee; avenues such as this one should be given to prevent discontent. Conversely, many employees have positive remarks of suggestions that can be beneficial to the organization.

#### E. Process Five: Follow-up

1. Upon conclusion of process four, the evaluation begins anew, and processes one through four are followed throughout the next evaluation period.
2. The previously completed evaluation establishes foundation for the supervisor and employee to build upon. It requires the continual interaction between employee and supervisor and open, honest communication.
3. Process five may be, inherently, the most important process because the continued interaction and follow-up on the part of the supervisor will assist the employee in improving performance, strengthening weaknesses, developing skills and abilities, and reaching goals and objectives.

### III. RATING ERRORS

#### A. Halo Error: rating one trait affects or bias's how you will rate on other traits.

1. Occurs most often when subordinate is especially friendly or unfriendly with the supervisor.
2. Be careful not to generalize about a member's/subordinate's performance or allow your reaction to one quality to color your entire opinion of the member's work.

#### B. Leniency Error: one of the most common problems and also one of the hardest to detect. If there is the slightest reason to upgrade a rating it is usually done.

1. If you find you are leaning over backwards to give an employee a good rating, remember you are devaluing the performance of the superior member.

#### C. Central Tendency Error: rating average or along the central area of the rating scale.

1. Be realistic in your appraisals and force yourself to make appropriate distinctions on the scale.

#### D. Harshness Error: tendency to assign a lower rating than warranted by

actual job performance.

1. Be realistic in your appraisals and force yourself to make appropriate distinctions on the scale.

E. Recency Error: tendency to allow recent events or behavior to unduly influence overall performance.

1. Keeping current documentation on the member's performance throughout the evaluation period will diminish the effect of this type of error.

F. Contrast Error: tendency to compare rater's own expectations and aspirations with those of the ratee's.

1. To avoid the effect of contrast errors you must always rate members on the degree to which they fulfill the requirements of the job, not on how they compare to others.

G. Association Error: tendency to misinterpret semantic meaning of terms used to define performance and describe rating scales.

1. Be familiar with behavioral anchors at the beginning of the evaluation period.

#### IV. SUPERVISOR/EMPLOYEE LOG

A. Policy: Supervisors are responsible for the recording of significant incidents, accomplishments, problems and other performance factors of the employees. To help the supervisor accomplish this Supervisor/Employee Log will be maintained on each employee. This log will assist both the supervisor and the employee at the time of evaluations.

B. Procedure:

1. Supervisors are to make entries into the log that briefly describe the employee's accomplishments, significant achievements, or problems.
2. Employees may make written comments or responses in the log book.
3. Each employee may have access to his/her own log when a supervisor is available to assist.
4. The supervisors are responsible for maintaining the logs, monitoring their respective subordinate's positive



attributes/deficiencies, and taking proactive, corrective action for identified shortcomings.

- C. The purpose of Performance evaluations is not for disciplinary action—they are to help employees develop and grow within the department. If a below expected evaluation is received the following action may be taken.
1. Employees who receive an evaluation rating below department standards (overall below 2.00), the employee will be assigned to a Performance Improvement Plan.
  2. The length and terms of the Performance Improvement Plan will be at the discretion of the Chief of Police. The Performance Improvement Plan will consist of additional training, mentoring and structure as designated on a case-by-case basis by the employee's supervisor and approved by the Chief of Police. The Performance Improvement Plan will not exceed 12 months.
  3. While assigned to the Performance Improvement Plan, the employee will be evaluated midway through and at the conclusion of the period designated by the Chief of Police.
  4. If the Performance Improvement Plan period occurs during a scheduled salary increase for the employee, the salary adjustment may be postponed during the interim probationary period.
  5. If the evaluation at the conclusion of the Performance Improvement Plan period does not meet expectations, the employee may face other corrective or disciplinary action included, but not limited to, a continued withholding of the salary increase, suspension or termination.